

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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FOLLOWING REPEAT MADRID 2221 ACTION SECSTATE APRIL 6,

QUOTE

UNCLAS MADRID 2221

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SUBJECT: PRESSREACTION TO PRESIDENT NIXON'S FRENCH VISIT.

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SPANISH PRESS COVERAGE HAS BEEN MODERATE ON PRESIDENT NIXON'S TRIP TO FRANCE TO ATTEND THE POMPIDOU FUNERAL CEREMONIES. ON FRIDAY, PUEBLO, THE MADRID AFTERNOON WORKING-MAN'S NEWSPAPER, CARRIED AN INSIDE STORY HEADLINED "THE PRESIDENT WILL GO TO PARIS." FILED BY PUEBLO'S NEW YORK CORRESPONDENT, J.M. CARRASCAL, HE WROTE THAT WITH THE VISIT "RICHARD NIXON WILL TRY TO FILL THE GAP THAT THE DEATH OF HIS FRENCH COLLEAGUE HAS LEFT IN EUROPE. I DON'T BELIEVE HE WILL TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OCCASION TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THE OTHER HEADS OF STATE." FURTHER CARRASCAL, DREW SYMBOLIC REFERENCE TO THE DEATH OF POMPIDOU AND THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF NATO ADDING THAT "TODAY, THERE IS A MORE URGENT NECESSITY FOR A THAW, A RELIEVING

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OF TENSIONS, A DETENTE BETWEEN WESTERN EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES

THAN BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION. RICHARD NIXON WANTS TO BEGIN THAT THAW OVER THE BODY OF A FRENCH PRESIDENT."

NUEVO DIARIO, ANOTHER DAILY, HEADLINED ITS FRIDAY EDITION WITH PRESIDENT NIXON'S PROJECTED TRIP AND SUPPORTED THE PUEBLO ANALYSIS BY STATING THAT "NIXON WILL NOT HOLD SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHER HEADS OF STATE WHO ARE GATHERING FOR THE FUNERAL."

THERE WAS ADDITIONAL PRESS COVERAGE ON SATURDAY, LIGHTER THAN FRIDAY'S. THE MONARCHIST DAILY, ABC, PRINTED A PAGE THREE PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT NIXON ARRIVING IN PARIS WITH A CAPTION NOTING IT WAS HIS THIRD VISIT TO FRANCE AS PRESIDENT. NO MENTION OF PRESIDENT NIXON WAS MADE IN ABC'S LENGTHY ANALYSIS OF THE FRENCH POLITICAL SCENE AND THE FUNERAL SERVICE.

ROMAN CATHOLIC-ORIENTED YA, ON ITS LEADING PAGE HEADLINE, DID NOTE THAT THERE WAS TALK IN PARIS OF A POSSIBLE "EUROPEAN MINISUMMIT" DEU TO THE PRESENCE OF PRESIDENT NIXON AND EUROPEAN LEADERS. IN ITS TEXT YA WROTE THAT "THERE IS TALK OF A POSSIBLE BRANDT-NIXON MEETING AND OF A POSSIBLE EUROPEAN MINISUMMIT." YA ADDED, HOWEVER, THAT SPECULATION WAS WIDESPREAD ON POSSIBLE MEETINGS OF NATIONAL LEADERS. ARriba, THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT DAILY, LISTED PRESIDENT NIXON ALONG WITH OTHER HEADS OF STATE AS ATTENDING THE PARIS SERVICE. MUCH NEWS COVERAGE WAS GIVEN THE PARIS ARRIVAL OF SPANISH PRESIDENT OF GOVERNMENT CARLOS ARIAS NAVARRO AND FOREIGN MINISTER PEDRO CORTINA. THIS COVERAGE, AS WOULD BE EXPECTED, OVERSHADOWED THE PARIS VISITS OF OTHER FOREIGN LEADERS. ADDITIONAL EDITORIAL REACTION MAY BE EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT FEW DAYS.

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